It Could Happen to You!

By Peggy Carter

Those Strange Tales of "The Whistler" Are Built Around Plausible Happenings Which Might Denote YOUR Future

THE CANDID CAMERAMAN snapped producer George Allen in the midst of directorial duties for a recent "Whistler" rehearsal.

Eddie Braslaff Photos

Monday 9 p.m. KNX

"THE WHISTLER," that man of mystery "who knows many things," brings his strange tales to you through the courtesy of Producer George Allen, Writing Supervisor Bud Swanton, Engineer Robert Anderson, Musical Conductor Wilbur Hatch, and Soundman Berne Surrey.

Radio Life obtained this data when we dropped in on a recent Monday afternoon rehearsal of the KNX airer to learn what goes on behind-scenes of the Pacific Coast's leading mystery show. We met genial producer Allen and watched Anderson, Surrey and a capable cast of radio veterans put the show through its first paces. The Whistler was present, but we're sworn to secrecy, and his identity must remain an anonymity.

"What goes into making a good mystery airer?"

When we put the question to Allen he thoughtfully answered, "An interesting, well-adapted story, a competent cast, the right sound effects, effective mood music and perfect timing." Mr. Allen enacts the role of chef in properly mixing these ingredients and the Monday night dish which emerges is tasty enough to please the palates of all the rabid

CONDUCTOR WILBUR HATCH IS THE MAN Allen credits for the startlingly eerie musical background of the show. Most of Hatch's music is original.

VETERAN RADIO PERFORMERS, such as Elliot Lewis at the microphone and soundman Berne Surrey on the steps, add to realism of CBS' leading Coast Network show. "They're tops," complimented the producer.

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HATCH PUTS HIS CREW through a thorough rehearsal several hours prior to the actual evening broadcast.

WHILE LEWIS AND A FELLOW PERFORMER run through their lines for the benefit of Allen in the control booth, other cast members study their own parts. The screen-like doors behind the actors encase the special microphone with which the "Whistler" works.

mystery fans. In fact, "The Whistler's" really cookin'!

Meticulous Producer

George Allen will celebrate his second year as the program's producer this July. According to associates, the show's steadily rising Hooperating is due to Allen's consistently skilful production. He is a perfectionist and not even a minute detail escapes his attention.

Rehearsal is no last minute affair. The cast assembles with Allen for a round-table reading at 4:30 p.m. and with the exception of a few breaks, continues until the 9:00 o'clock airing. The orchestra joins the cast at 7:15 p. m.

The sardonic narration of "The Whistler" is well-known to listeners. Yet each week's story is varied and complete within itself. Allen and Writing Supervisor Swanton look for realistic, logical stories which never trap the audience into believing the solution.

Having decided upon a script (they are submitted by free-lance writers) for a future show, Allen turns it over to Swanton who gives it that "Whistler" slant. Then musical conductor Wilbur Hatch goes to work on it. He creates original mood music, such an integral factor in building suspense.

Allen uses cream-of-the-crop radio actors and actresses to make the stories come to life. "We have no tricks of any kind up our sleeve," smiled the producer. "We're here merely to entertain you. We make use of every opportunity to present a logical story. *It could happen to you!*"

WE'RE NOT SURE WHETHER writer Bud Swanton is kidding or not with the profound volume of "The Murder Manual" in hand. Swanton gives free-lance scripts that "Whistler" touch.

WORKING IN CLOSE UNISON with the cast are soundman Surrey and his assistant. Surrey won special recognition in Radio Life's Annual Achievement Awards for his fine work in "Suspense's", "Sorry, Wrong Number".

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